



Connecticut Department of Public Health

Testimony Presented Before the Judiciary Committee

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House Bill 6321, An Act Concerning Adoption and Implementation of the Connecticut Parentage Act

The Department of Public Health (DPH) provides the following information related to House Bill 6321, the Connecticut Parentage Act. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this important issue.

DPH is supportive of the positive health equity impact of this bill. Revising the mechanisms for establishing parentage will make it easier for a parent with no biological connection to their child to establish a legal relationship with that child. It also allows for a court adjudication to be made that a child have more than two parents. Since it will be easier to establish parentage, a child may be afforded the opportunity to obtain health insurance coverage through an acknowledged or adjudicated parent. This can potentially lead to improved health care services for the child.

The Department would like to clarify how the bill relates to DPH's role as the administrator of the state's paternity registry and the statewide vital records system.

Section 23 allows a court to adjudicate for a child to have more than two parents when there are competing claims of parentage by two or more persons. Should this decision need to be reflected on a birth certificate, it is important to note that the Department's birth registry cannot accommodate the names of more than two parents. DPH requests substitute language be added to the bill to make it clear that, for the time being, only the first two parents will be listed on the birth record.

Sections 24 and 36 allow for the voluntary establishment of parentage based upon a person's length of time in the household and level of involvement with the child's upbringing, rather than genetics. The Department would like to clarify whether the sworn statements of the parent and acknowledging parent would be acceptable, or if other means would be needed for verification.

DPH stands ready to work with the proponents of the bill to clarify the Department's role in these policy changes. Thank you for your consideration of this request.